

APPENDIX 7: PHIP LAWS

RCW 43.70.520

Public health services improvement plan.

(1) The legislature finds that the public health functions of community assessment, policy development, and assurance of service delivery are essential elements in achieving the objectives of health reform in Washington state. The legislature further finds that the population-based services provided by state and local health departments are cost-effective and are a critical strategy for the long-term containment of health care costs. The legislature further finds that the public health system in the state lacks the capacity to fulfill these functions consistent with the needs of a reformed health care system.

(2) The department of health shall develop, in consultation with local health departments and districts, the state board of health, the health services commission, area Indian health service, and other state agencies, health services providers, and citizens concerned about public health, a public health services improvement plan. The plan shall provide a detailed accounting of deficits in the core functions of assessment, policy development, assurance of the current public health system, how additional public health funding would be used, and describe the benefits expected from expanded expenditures.

(3) The plan shall include:

(a) Definition of minimum standards for public health protection through assessment, policy development, and assurances:

(i) Enumeration of communities not meeting those standards;

(ii) A budget and staffing plan for bringing all communities up to minimum standards;

(iii) An analysis of the costs and benefits expected from adopting minimum public health standards for assessment, policy development, and assurances;

(b) Recommended strategies and a schedule for improving public health programs throughout the state, including:

(i) Strategies for transferring personal health care services from the public health system, into the uniform benefits package where feasible; and

(ii) Timing of increased funding for public health services linked to specific objectives for improving public health; and

(c) A recommended level of dedicated funding for public health services to be expressed in terms of a percentage of total health service expenditures in the state or a set per person amount; such recommendation shall also include methods to ensure that such funding does not supplant existing federal, state, and local funds received by local health departments, and methods of distributing funds among local health departments.

(4) The department shall coordinate this planning process with the study activities required in section 258, chapter 492, Laws of 1993.

(5) By March 1, 1994, the department shall provide initial recommendations of the public health services improvement plan to the legislature regarding minimum public health standards, and public health programs needed to address urgent needs, such as those cited in subsection (8) of this section.

(6) By December 1, 1994, the department shall present the public health services improvement plan to the legislature, with specific recommendations for each element of the plan to be implemented over the period from 1995 through 1997.

(7) Thereafter, the department shall update the public health services improvement plan for presentation to the legislature prior to the beginning of a new biennium.

(8) Among the specific population-based public health activities to be considered in the public health services improvement plan are: Health data assessment and chronic and infectious disease surveillance; rapid response to outbreaks of communicable disease; efforts to prevent and control specific communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis and acquired immune deficiency syndrome; health education to promote healthy behaviors and to reduce the prevalence of chronic disease, such as those linked to the use of tobacco; access to primary care in coordination with existing community and migrant health clinics and other not for profit health care organizations; programs to ensure children are born as healthy as possible and they receive immunizations and adequate nutrition; efforts to prevent intentional and unintentional injury; programs to ensure the safety of drinking water and food supplies; poison control; trauma services; and other activities that have the potential to improve the health of the population or special populations and reduce the need for or cost of health services.

[1993 c 492 § 467.]

RCW 43.70.580

Public health improvement plan—Funds—Performance-based contracts—Rules—Evaluation and report.

The primary responsibility of the public health system, is to take those actions necessary to protect, promote, and improve the health of the population. In order to accomplish this, the department shall:

(1) Identify, as part of the public health improvement plan, the key health outcomes sought for the population and the capacity needed by the public health system to fulfill its responsibilities in improving health outcomes.

(2)(a) Distribute state funds that, in conjunction with local revenues, are intended to improve the capacity of the public health system. The distribution methodology shall encourage system-wide effectiveness and efficiency and provide local health jurisdictions with the flexibility both to determine governance structures and address their unique needs.

(b) Enter into with each local health jurisdiction performance-based contracts that establish clear measures of the degree to which the local health jurisdiction is attaining the capacity necessary to improve health outcomes. The contracts negotiated between the local health jurisdictions and the department of health must identify the specific measurable progress that local health jurisdictions will make toward achieving health outcomes. A community assessment conducted by the local health jurisdiction according to the public health improvement plan, which shall include the results of the comprehensive plan prepared according to RCW 70.190.130, will be used as the basis for identifying the health outcomes. The contracts shall include provisions to encourage collaboration among local health jurisdictions. State funds shall be used solely to expand and complement, but not to supplant city and county government support for public health programs.

(3) Develop criteria to assess the degree to which capacity is being achieved and ensure compliance by public health jurisdictions.

(4) Adopt rules necessary to carry out the purposes of chapter 43, Laws of 1995.

(5) Biennially, within the public health improvement plan, evaluate the effectiveness of the public health system, assess the degree to which the public health system is attaining the capacity to improve the status of the public's health, and report progress made by each local health jurisdiction toward improving health outcomes.

[1995 c 43 § 3.]